

**COLORADO CANYONS NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA
Wilderness Working Group Meeting Minutes
July 16, 2002**

Attendees:

Doralyn Genova	Belle Chesnick	Celeste Marsh	Harold Snyder
Warren Gore	Steve Cohn	Jane Ross	
Joe Keys	Terry Gray	Bill Schapley	
Gene Arnesen	Kris Hjelle	Bob Sherrill	

Greetings and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. Maps, minutes, issue papers, and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) visitor-count statistics were handed out. An extra meeting has been scheduled for July 30, at the Glade Park Community Center.

Working Group Discussions

Warren Gore presented his write-up on the BS spur roads. The spurs marked "G" and "H" are not shown on the map but will be included in the next updated map. Warren explained the changes in the designations. It was suggested that all be left open, except for spurs "D" and "E" which should be closed and rehabilitated. The other roads will remain open up to a quarter of a mile from BS Road for use as "designated" camping sites. If they grow beyond their current termination points, the BLM will close them as well. It was suggested that signs be put up indicating closures/openings and terminations.

Bill Hamman wants signs placed at the main road too, indicating spur road limits. All-terrain vehicle (ATV) use is a problem, and if these user groups cut cross-country, then BLM will close the spur roads. The BLM will decide what type of barricades to use; preferably they will be constructed from a material that blends with the background.

Jane Ross, Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area (CCNCA) Planning Team Leader, proposed that the group suggest a location for a larger campground. Deciding on size, features and uses will be up to the group. Troy Schnurr, CCNCA Recreation Ranger, would like to see a campground along the BS road, but this Working Group is against the development. The potential for future development has already been identified. Terry Gray voiced his opinion that he did not see a need for development, since the area was too far out and had no water. The point was made to the group to build in flexibility to its recommendations. The group's position is to keep the Wilderness area primitive to the extent possible.

The group discussed the Knowles Canyon Trailhead, and whether horse trailer parking should be allowed at the alcove. Bill Hamman feels that more signs are needed for directing horse trailer parking in an attempt to prevent problems with turning around. It was suggested that room be left for adding a sign later, but most people in this group do not want any more signs. The group continued on to Jones Canyon Trailhead issues. Bill Schapley wants to fix the wording addressing motorized and mechanized-use access should allow administrative use only. Someone countered that a single-track/quiet trail would prohibit administrative motorized/mechanized use. The group agreed to approve Warren's draft recommendations for BS road, after a few, minor administrative edits, and then present it to the Advisory Council.

Bill Schapley broached the Mee Canyon boundary adjustment. The group had wanted to move the boundary to the allotment fence line; rather than build a cherry-stem road that will be double-track all the way in. Bill Hamman asked how boundaries are determined. During the development phase of the Wilderness Study Area (WSA), a map was attached. Because of the number of changes that may be needed in many of the newly designated National Conservation Areas and Monuments, one piece of legislation may be proposed by the BLM's Washington DC office to address all changes at the same time.

Bob Sherrill asked to strike the last item regarding "other boundary adjustments," since he does not think that boundaries are clear, especially in the State Wildlife Area. Bill Schapley wants to leave it as it is to have closure on this topic. "Mee Canyon Trailhead Boundary Adjustment" will be added to the wording, per Doralyn Genova's suggestion.

Bob Sherrill addressed private-land interface issues and voiced a concern about hunting occurring near people and property near the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) area. Shooting is a concern to the homeowners in this area. It was asked whether a letter should be sent to Greg Walcher in order to elevate this problem, and it was recommended that the Advisory Council send the letter. Warren Gore felt these issues should be tabled until Greg Walcher became involved and the July 26 field trip takes place (two areas only; Front Country in the morning). Bob accepts having the Advisory Council handle this set of issues.

Steve Cohn pointed out a property tax issue mentioned in Bob's issues and concerns and mentioned the Mesa County Land Trust (MCLT). Doralyn stated that the MCLT is the best avenue to take. Mesa County is willing to discuss the issues, but the assessor must follow the law.

Terry wants horses to access the Wilderness using the Ute Trail from Pollock Bench. This would allow riders access to Rattlesnake Canyon. It was recommended that the Division of Wildlife (DOW), City of Fruita, and any other interested parties, meet with the Pollock Canyon Estates homeowners association, and then report back to the Advisory Council.

Bill Schapley wants information from the BLM regarding over-flight regulations.

Bill Hamman returned to Rattlesnake Canyon and the cherry-stem alternatives. Warren did not feel that even a flat space would allow enough room for parking. Strip parking is a possibility with either parallel or angle parking. One recommendation was to not grade the area, and install a "limited parking" sign to warn people.

Belle Chesnick asked whether the road would be repaired, if it washed out. Someone suggested cooperation among the 4-wheel drive groups in keeping the road passable. The group consensus was to leave the area as primitive as possible.

Bill Hamman believes the Arches (Rattlesnake) are "being loved to death," and suggested trying to reduce impact by increasing the walk to view them. A group member reminded others about its historical use, and why the Wilderness was created should be kept in mind.

Someone asked about barricading the Wilderness boundary. It was then stated that perhaps existing parking should be utilized, with spillover areas provided. Jane proposed a combination of options 1, 2, and 3, and advised the group that issues can be taken to a higher-level of BLM management. Someone asked whether a turnaround was needed.

Several other issues were discussed, including if traffic is brought back to the "T", there is concern about bicycles; even quiet trails create resource damage; and recommending toilets or not. It was suggested that the group use the same wording regarding toilets as was used by Bill and Warren on other issues.

The group discussed a mandatory "pack it in, pack it out" policy.

Someone asked whether the BLM will identify parking with lots of big rocks at the end of the road. Another comment was that the Ruby Canyon plan prohibited camping along the cherry-stem road. This plan should avoid allowing camping along the cherry-stem, since it is already crowded. Instead, the group might want to consider allowing some dispersed camping along the lower road. Bill Hamman will draft a recommendation for further discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.